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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Lumbering Operations at the Petchatkins
Pulp Factory 25X1

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1.

... were made into pulp. This pulp was then sent to nearby Sokol (50°28'N, 10°E), where it was manufactured into paper products. The logs already cut into six-meter lengths.

The diameters averaged about 12 inches.

2.

All of the lumber was pine. The trees had short needles and resembled fir trees.

3.

The logs which were floated down the river were cut into six-meter lengths. Logs brought from the forest by barge and by rail arrived in two-meter lengths. The six-meter lengths were cut up into two-meter lengths before being sent inside the pulp factory.

4.

The town of Petchatkins had a native population of about three thousand. Of these almost every able-bodied man or woman worked in the pulp factory as there was no other occupation in evidence. There were 700 POW's working there, but [redacted] allowed to work outside the plant preparing the wood for processing. The plant itself was worked by Soviet civilians, working three eight-hour shifts, seven days a week. This schedule was also worked by the POW's, who were divided into work groups of 20 men each. Both POW's and civilians received one day off per week on staggered schedules which permitted full seven days per week operations to continue.

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- 2 -

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5. [redacted] all of Petchatkin's production is consumed by the paper mill at Sokol. The paper was very rough and was produced in various sizes, grades and colors. [redacted] the huge factory at Sokol produced a very diversified line of paper products.

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6. There is a steady supply of lumber coming into Petchatkin, and [redacted] production never had to slow down because of a shortage of cut logs on hand. These logs came to the factory by rail, barge and flotation. Floating of the logs downstream was only possible from late April until the middle of May, during which period the river was at its highest due to the melting of upstream snows. During this period the surplus logs would be stockpiled. During the summer months logs would be brought in by barges.

7. The river would freeze over about the end of October and the only log transportation would be by rail until the April thaw. This track operated all year long but actually only carried a small percentage of the lumber processed in the factory.

8. This railroad was the usual wide gauge used in the USSR. There was only one engine on the entire track. It was a medium sized engine of German manufacture. The freight cars were of the typical two-wheel boxcar variety. There were no flat cars so the logs were cut into two-meter lengths and loaded into the boxcars by hand. The two-meter lengths permitted them to be set up in two stacks running parallel with the rails and one stack laid across the middle of the car at the door. The lumber was unloaded by hand by the POW's.

9. At the lumber dock point the river is 200 feet wide during the spring. The banks are quite flat and the current is usually slow. Across the river from the pulp factory was a deserted village of about 60 houses. Two of us once made a trip across to this village and were quite surprised to find it entirely abandoned. Later we learned from several POW's that there were many such completely deserted villages in that area.

10. The lumber was removed from the river by four conveyor "bridges." Two of these were about 100 meters long and were used for taking the two-meter logs out of the barges. The two larger ones took the six-meter logs directly out of the water. These conveyors rose on a shallow incline from the water to a height of about seven meters. The belts were about 200 to 250 meters in length and about three meters wide. The logs were held in place by steel "teeth" until they reached the top of the incline, at which point they would be rolled off by POW's onto the ground on one side. From here the logs were rolled downhill along log "tracks" laid perpendicular to the conveyor "bridge." These would be rolled to the stockpile area where other POW's would stack the logs in various sized piles. At this area the logs were cut into two-meter sizes by electric power saws and loaded by hand onto a small railroad which carried them about one and a half km to the factory itself. The distance from the stockpile to the railroad was often 200 to 300 meters and the logs were carried by hand to the train by the POW's. The train consisted of 15 to 20 boxcars pulled by a small and ancient German locomotive. This locomotive bore a plate which dated its manufacture as 1904.

11. The conveyors and the power saws were all powered with electricity which came [redacted] on wires from the pulp factory. The pulp factory, in turn, also received its electrical power from the outside. The conveyors were run by electrical motors set up in houses under the top of the incline. The entire operation suffered power failures once or twice a week and often it took as much as four hours to get the motors back in operation.

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